

ASSASSINATIONS & ASSASSINS

NEW SUSPECT IN J.F.K. CASE

A former chief of detectives with the Los Angeles sheriff's department is alleging that he interviewed the actual assassin of President John Kennedy just three years ago in London.

The former detective, Hugh McDonald, claims that President Kennedy's assassin was not Lee Harvey Oswald—as the Warren Commission claimed—but was a C.I.A. contact agent with a "white Russian background" who is now hiding out in Europe.

McDonald, who has written a new book about the purported interview entitled "Appointment in Dallas," identifies the alleged assassin only by the code-name "saul." His book, however, contains a number of photographs of the reported murderer—photos which were originally obtained from the Warren Commission Files.

The man whom McDonald claims was the actual assassin was photographed by the C.I.A. in Mexico City about two months before the assassination. The C.I.A. originally identified the man in the picture as Oswald, and then later acknowledged its mistake. The individual's true identity has never been revealed.

McDonald alleges that he had once met the man prior to the assassination at the C.I.A. headquarters in Virginia. He says that after seeing the photos, he tracked "Saul" down in 1972 in London and learned details about the presidential ambush in Dallas.

According to the former detective, "Saul" told him that he fired shots at the presidential motorcade from a building across the street from where Oswald was located.

In the meantime, longtime assassination researcher Harold Weisberg is sharply critical of the McDonald account. Weisberg claims that McDonald had been telling the same story long before 1972, the date when McDonald now says the alleged interview took place. Says Weisberg: "The question is 'who's behind it and why.'"

CONGRESSMEN INVESTIGATING J.F.K. DEATH

Two separate Congressional committees are now looking into possible weaknesses in the Warren Commission's investigation into President John Kennedy's assassination.

A two member subcommittee of the Senate Select Committee On Intelligence composed of Senators Richard Schweiker and Gary Hart—are screening evidence possibly linking either the F.B.I. or the C.I.A. to the 1963 assassination.

In the meantime, Congressman Donald Edwards of California says his Civil and Constitutional Rights Subcommittee is reinvestigating both Lee Harvey Oswald's and Jack Ruby's ties to the F.B.I.

Edwards says his subcommittee will attempt to determine if either Oswald or Ruby were undercover informers for the Bureau prior to the assassination, and if the F.B.I. may have had prior knowledge of the assassination attempt in Dallas, as a former F.B.I. clerk has charged.

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RUBY AT J.F.K. SITE, SAYS WITNESS

Former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison has released a sworn statement by a witness who claims she saw Jack Ruby with a rifle case at the scene of President Kennedy's assassination two hours before the shots were fired.

The statement by the witness, Julia Ann Mercer, also contends that she positively identified Ruby to the F.B.I. on the day following President Kennedy's murder—24 hours before Ruby shot Oswald to death at the Dallas police station.

Mercer's statement, released by Garrison, charges that the F.B.I. changed her testimony in order to hide the fact that she had identified Ruby to the Bureau even before Ruby killed Oswald.

An F.B.I. interview with Mercer, conducted on the day following the assassination, says only that Mercer saw two men at the assassination scene with what looked like a rifle case. One of the two men is described as being "heavy-set" and about 45-years-old, a rough, general, description that could fit Ruby.

However, Mercer's new statement says that the F.B.I. showed her several picture photographs on the day after the assassination, one of them of Ruby. She states that after she identified the face in one of the pictures, the F.B.I. agent who showed her the snapshot turned it over, and the name "Jack Ruby" was written on the back of it.

Garrison, in a speech before the Citizen's Commission of Inquiry at the University of Hartford over the weekend, stated that the F.B.I. deliberately suppressed Mercer's original testimony.

THEY BUGGED MARINA

The F.B.I. secretly bugged the residence of Lee Harvey Oswald's widow, Marina, for several months following President Kennedy's assassination in Dallas — but never informed the Warren Commission about the bugs or what they might have produced.

The "New York Times" reports that a former agent involved in the bugging of Marina Oswald has outlined the operation, and that the F.B.I. this week then confirmed details of the plan.

According to the "Times" sources, the electronic surveillance reportedly did not produce any new leads in the assassination investigation. However, the "Times" points out that the existence of the bugs without the Warren Commission's knowledge is another new indication that the Commission — which was investigating President Kennedy's murder — was not given all of the material uncovered by the F.B.I.

The F.B.I. recently admitted that the bureau secretly destroyed a threatening letter it had received from Oswald shortly before the assassination without informing the Commission about its existence.

David Belin, a Commission attorney who has repeatedly defended the Warren Commission's investigation — when told of the bugging being kept a secret from the Commission — stated "It strikes me as horrible."